

FRIENDS OF IRELAND

HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 20, 2000

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, in the spirit of St. Patrick's Day, I am inviting all my colleagues to become a Friend of Ireland. The Friends of Ireland is a bipartisan congressional organization established in 1981 by the late Speaker, Thomas "Tip" O'Neill. Every successive Speaker has carried on the tradition with Speaker HASTERT and Minority Leader GEPHARDT serving as honorary chairmen of the group.

The purpose of the Friends of Ireland is to increase the bonds of friendship and understanding between the American people and the people of Ireland. We look for a peaceful solution to the problems of this troubled land. Our organization is open to all Members of the 106th Congress who share its principles and has attracted widespread support over the years. There are also several Senators who are members of the Friends.

Over the years, the statements of support for peace in Ireland, condemnations of human rights abuses, assistance to the International Fund for Ireland and general expressions of goodwill have made a difference. The voice of the U.S. Congress is listened to very attentively in Ireland both in the Republic and in the North.

I submit this year's St. Patrick's Day Statement for the RECORD:

STATEMENT BY THE FRIENDS OF IRELAND—
SAINT PATRICK'S DAY 2000

On this first St. Patrick's Day of the new millennium, the Friends of Ireland in the United States Congress join 45 million Irish-Americans of both traditions in celebrating the unique bonds between our two nations. We send greetings to the President of Ireland, Mary McAleese and warmly welcome the Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern, on his third St. Patrick's day visit to Washington. We share the hopes of the Irish people that the current impasse in the Northern Ireland peace process will be broken soon.

We are deeply troubled by the suspension of the democratically elected Government of Northern Ireland by the British Government and the stalemate over decommissioning. We urge all political leaders in the North to recommit themselves to the spirit and letter of the Good Friday Agreement. We have provided strong and consistent support throughout the peace process to all parties committed to peace, and we reaffirm our commitment to the full implementation of the Agreement.

The Good Friday Agreement was endorsed decisively by the people of Ireland both North and South with majorities from both traditions. It is a mandate given to those working on behalf of peace, justice and the creation of a new beginning in Northern Ireland. Successful implementation is predicated on the concurrent resolution of all the interdependent aspects of the Agreement. The successful implementation of the agreement must be the clear goal for all who want to consolidate the progress that has been made and to avoid the danger of failure for yet another generation in Northern Ireland.

At this time, the institutions of devolved government are suspended. The suspension was not caused by any failure of the institutions themselves, nor by any violation of the Agreement, but by an internal political cri-

sis focused on the issue of decommissioning. We encourage the political leaders to bridge this crisis of confidence and secure the reinstatement of the institutions as soon as possible. Their absence creates a gap which the enemies of peace can and will exploit. It is vital that they are not permitted to succeed. The ongoing cease-fire are major confidence building measures, and it should be made clear that any return to violence is not an option. We condemn unequivocally all acts of violence.

We call on all sides to implement additional confidence building measures. Root causes of violence—prejudice, religious intolerance and sectarianism—must also be eliminated. The nationalist and unionist communities must see that politics is working and believe their future can rest with the actions of their democratically elected representatives in the Assembly.

The issue of confidence in the integrity of the democratic institutions set up under the Good Friday Agreement must not be seen as confined to the agenda of any one side. It is a shared requirement which all have a vital stake in restoring. Each party is committed under the Agreement to ensure the viability and effective operation of the political process pledged in the Agreement by persuading those who hold weapons that such weapons can have no role whatsoever in a democratic system.

In spite of discouraging setbacks, we believe that a way forward can be found on this difficult issue by building on the progress already made. We welcome the acknowledgment by the IRA that "the issue of arms needs to be dealt with in an acceptable way and this is a necessary objective of a genuine peace process." We also welcome the work in identifying and advancing the context where this goal can most successfully be achieved. We consider a crucial test to be whether the electorate in Northern Ireland can be reassured that their democratic wishes will not be undermined by actual or threatened recourse to guns from any side.

We believe there is now an acceptance of this fundamental principle across the entire political spectrum which offers a basis for reaching an accommodation, provided the parties approach it in a spirit of reciprocal action, and with sensitivity about the real constraints on each side and the need for skillful and patient management of these constraints. We urge renewed dialogue in this spirit using the Independent Commission headed by General de Chastelain. The paramilitaries must put weapons beyond use and make progress on the decommissioning issue.

The British Government must reasonably scale down its military presence in the North. We also give particular importance to the timely implementation of the Patten Report, including the urgent appointment of an Oversight Commissioner and assistants, the early publication of a detailed implementation plan, and the speedy passage of legislation. We believe the publication of the Criminal Justice Review should begin a program of significant reforms. We support changes that ensure a police force with representation from both communities and a criminal justice system which will command loyalty from all people living in Northern Ireland. These are the essential ingredients necessary in the creation of a just and peaceful society.

We also note the importance of moving forward on human rights and equality issues under the Agreement. This includes the creation of a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland and the obligation to promote equal opportunity. We emphasize the continuing need to demonstrate public commitment to human rights and accountability through the estab-

lishment of independent inquiries into the Finucane, Nelson and Hamill cases.

We support the initiative taken by the Irish and British Prime Ministers at the beginning of this month to launch a round of intensive consultations to restore the institutions of the Good Friday Agreement and deal with the arms issues as quickly as possible.

Over this St. Patrick's Day period, we will be urging all the leaders from Northern Ireland to recognize the importance of what is at stake, the danger of delay, and the need for a genuine and sincere collective effort to overcome these last remaining obstacles to the full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement. All Friends of Ireland in the United States stand ready to help in any possible way.

FRIENDS OF IRELAND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

HOUSE

J. Dennis Hastert
Richard A. Gephardt
James T. Walsh

SENATE

Edward M. Kennedy
Daniel Patrick Moynihan
Christopher J. Dodd
Connie Mack

HONORING MICHAEL KELLY OF
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 20, 2000

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Mr. Mike Kelly on the eve of his retirement from Golden Valley Electric Association in Alaska.

Michael P. Kelly has worked for 33 years; 17 of them were as Chief Executive Officer and President of the Golden Valley Electric Association. He is a leader within Alaska's utility industry. Throughout his thirty-three years he has grown Interior Alaska's lone electric co-op into a multi-million dollar enterprise which provides electrical service to an estimated 80,000 people. In fact, during his leadership GVEA has not raised its rates during the last 18 years.

Mike has dedicated his career at GVEA to fighting for projects and progress that have benefited consumers in both Alaska's Railbelt and in Alaska's remote regions. He led GVEA's purchase of the Fairbanks Municipal Utilities (electric) System, and has been the facilitator in the construction of the Northern Intertie Project has served in numerous leadership positions within the industry and in the community of Fairbanks, Alaska.

Not only has Mike been a industry leader but more importantly he has been a community leader within Fairbanks as well as a civic leader within the Great State of Alaska. He serves on the Boards of Denali State Bank and the Fairbanks Memorial Hospital Foundation. Mike is a member of Fairbanks Rotary, a past board member of the Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce. He just completed eight years on the University of Alaska Board of Regents and was the President of the Board from 1996–1998.

Mike as a leader in the utilities industry are notable. Mike has received numerous national, state and local recognitions including the Northwest Public Power Association Raver

Award in 1986 for displaying outstanding community service through leadership. Mike was recently named the 199 recipient of the Mason Lazelle Award, the highest honor awarded by the industry in Alaska, at the Alaska Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Annual Meeting in August, 1999.

Mike graduated from Monroe High School and from the University of Alaska at Fairbanks where he majored in Business Management. He is a past recipient of the Business Leader of the Year Award from UAF Associated Students of Business.

Mike is also an avid river boater and pilot and in his spare time he enjoys hunting, fishing, trapping and spending time with his family in the great Alaskan outdoors.

A RESOLUTION COMMENDING MILES LERMAN

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 20, 2000

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to reprint a resolution that was adopted recently by the members of the President's Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States.

This resolution commends Miles Lerman, a member of the commission, for his commitment and dedication to Holocaust memory and education. Mr. Lerman has also served as chairman of the Holocaust Memorial Council of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, but recently resigned from that position, though he remains a member of the Holocaust Memorial Council. The members of the Presidential Advisory Commission adopted this resolution unanimously in recognition of Mr. Lerman's extraordinary contributions to the pursuit of truth and justice for Holocaust victims and their families.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to submit for the RECORD and share the text of this resolution with our colleagues.

A RESOLUTION OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ADVISORY COMMISSION ON HOLOCAUST ASSETS IN THE UNITED STATES

MILES LERMAN

Whereas, Miles Lerman has been a leader in the pursuit of the truth and of justice for Holocaust victims and their families for decades; and

Whereas, over that time he has devoted enormous time and effort to educating the people of the world about the lessons of the Holocaust; and

Whereas, he participated in creating the Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States to investigate and advise on the fate of Holocaust victims' assets that came into the possession or control of the United States Government; and

Whereas, he has lent his moral authority and practical knowledge to the Presidential Commission as a Member since its creation; and

Whereas, the Presidential Commission hopes to continue to rely on him as it completes its work and delivers its recommendations to the President;

Now therefore, The Members of the Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States, with respect, admiration, and affection, gratefully acknowledge Miles Lerman and his extraordinary contributions to the pursuit of the truth and of justice for Holocaust victims and their families.

Unanimously agreed to by the Members of the Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States on February 29, 2000.

HONORING DON ANDERSON FOR SAVING A CHILD'S LIFE

HON. GEORGE W. GEKAS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 20, 2000

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Don Anderson of Dauphin County, PA, for his thoughtfulness and caring in saving a young girl's life. Mr. Anderson is a bus driver for Central Dauphin School District. During the last week of February, Mr. Anderson was picking up elementary school children as he did everyday on his bus route. Because Mr. Anderson is familiar with all the children who ride upon his bus, he noticed that a young girl was missing.

Mr. Anderson asked the girl's friend where she was. The little girl, although hesitant at first, told Mr. Anderson that her friend had taken pills and had passed out in her home. Mr. Anderson, being unable to leave the children under his care alone on the bus, sent this friend of the ailing girl back home to get her father. Mr. Anderson, pulled the bus to the side of the road and waited.

The friend's father, upon being told about the child, ran to her house and found her unconscious on the floor. He immediately called 911 and soon an ambulance was on its way. Mr. Anderson waited until the father returned to tell him the little girl was getting medical attention. Only then did Mr. Anderson complete his honorable job of delivering the rest of the children to school.

Mr. Anderson's care and devotion for children should serve as inspiration, not only for the citizens of Dauphin County, but for all of America. We all wish that all of our citizens exhibit the common sense and dedication to helping others that Mr. Anderson possesses. For the little girl, for her family and for all persons that you have helped with your selflessness, we thank you.

TRIBUTE TO VETERAN CONGRESSIONAL AIDE CARY BRICK

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 14, 2000

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join with many of my colleagues in recognizing a man who has served this House with great distinction for over 30 years. Cary R. Brick, chief of staff to our colleague Rep. JOHN MCHUGH, will retire on Friday of this week after three decades of service to this House and the people of the 24th district of New York. He has done this with great skill, dedication and determination throughout his tenure.

For just a moment I'd like to tell everyone why I wanted to come here and partake in this special tribute. It has been said that this world is made up of many special characters. In Cary Brick, better known to his New York friends as "The Dean", we have just such a person. No one can ever accuse Cary of being dull and boring. He has the ability to

make one laugh and tell great true life adventures relating to his work here on the Hill. More importantly he gets his point across and makes you feel like the end result was really your solution all along. That is a tremendous asset when working with people who might not be like minded.

There is a certain sadness to face when someone of ability and stature retires from the House. It is difficult because we lose more of the institutional memory around here that's so badly needed. There aren't many senior staff people in individual Member offices any longer and that doesn't help us to effectively do business around here.

In closing let me extend personal good wishes to "Dean" Brick from myself and all of his many friends both on and off the House campus. Cary, I hope you and your wonderful family enjoy fully the years ahead. You have earned the respect and admiration of those who know you.

I look forward to seeing you often in beautiful Upstate New York. Congratulations for a job well done!!

IN RECOGNITION OF THE OMAHA STAR

HON. LEE TERRY

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 20, 2000

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today on the occasion of Black Press Day. March 16 is the anniversary of the publication of the first black-owned newspaper in the United States.

On this day in 1827, the first edition of Freedom's Journal rolled off the presses and onto the streets of New York City.

I borrow from the National Newspaper Publishers Association when I recite the credo of the Black Press:

The Black Press believes that America can best lead the world away from racial and national antagonism when it accords to every person, regardless of race, color or creed, full human and legal rights. Hating no person, fearing no person, the Black Press strives to help every person in the firm belief that all are hurt as long as anyone is held back.

And there is no better example of this credo than in my own district in Nebraska. The Omaha Star is one of the nation's most renowned black-owned newspapers. The late Mildred D. Brown, who was one of the nation's most widely known publishers, founded it in 1938. Since its inception some 62 years ago, the Omaha Star has never missed an edition, and it is distributed in nearly every state of the Union.

The Omaha Star has been Omaha's main advocate and champion for the progress of African-Americans during its lifespan. Nebraska's only black-owned newspaper, the Omaha Star and Mrs. Brown were irreplaceable in their contributions to the city's growth and gain.

We owe a special debt of gratitude to the pioneers at the Omaha Star, both past and present, who lead the fight for acceptance of all races. And so, on behalf of all Nebraskans I say to the people of the Omaha Star, "Thank you."